

ADA Association



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MEMBERSHIP STATUS

New Members
339

Total Members
6,711

The Air Defense Artillery Association's campaign to raise funds to build a new ADA Museum continues to move forward. We are building on lessons learned during early funding efforts to make the building fund campaign more effective.

We have learned quite a bit more about writing grants and soliciting gifts. We are forming a grant writing oversight committee under the volunteer leadership of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Dick Wessling and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Randy Neeb. Dr. Wessling has prepared an action plan and a detailed job description for hiring a resource development coordinator who, among other fund-raising activities, will prepare grant proposals.

We have also learned more about the power of publicity. The ambitious plan to create a museum that will serve as a "world-class" showcase for Air Defense Artillery has already generated considerable enthusiasm inside and outside the Army. We recently activated a publicity committee whose purpose is to maintain the momentum by keeping a steady flow of articles pouring into the Fort Bliss *Monitor*, ADA magazine and other publications and media outlets. These articles will retell the colorful story of how Fort Bliss, El Paso and Air Defense Artillery grew up together, in the process forging close ties and writing indelible chapters into the nation's history books. They will also explain the envisioned museum's potential as a major regional tourist attraction and its potential as a cultural enrichment and education center for citizens of all ages.

The vision for the new ADA Museum features the dynamics of education. Certainly the museum will serve as the storehouse for the precious artifacts and as a stage for exhibitions and presentations of memorabilia that make our proud history come alive. The emphasis will be on teaching and educating a varied audience. The audience will include our young

officers, NCOs and enlisted soldiers who will attend museum sessions as part of their normal training. The ADA Museum will introduce casual visitors, especially those from generations bred after the advent of the all-volunteer Army, to a heritage they may have forgotten or never known.

A science and technology program will provide hands-on orientation for high school students. They will be able to admire the technology embedded in the world's finest ADA equipment and marvel at technological advances that are producing even more advanced weaponry to meet future threats. The vision is to create an atmosphere similar to the Space Complex in Huntsville, Ala., at Fort Bliss for young people. Sam Hoyle, Fort Bliss director of museums, will soon demonstrate the impact of such education programs through the Children's Bicultural History program this year at Fort Bliss' Replica Museum. We expect to continue this program, as well as the ADA Museum, once it is built and its educational programs are implemented.

A soon-to-be-implemented program to generate ADA soldiers and unit enthusiasm and increase expertise in certain ADA weapons of the past is called "Adopt an Artifact Program." Fort Bliss units will "adopt" a weapon system artifact currently in storage in various buildings around the installation. The units, with guidance from museum experts, will cosmetically restore the weapons, which will then be placed on display in a large-bay training building on Fort Bliss as part of the new training exhibit.

These are some of the ongoing activities and initiatives designed to raise enthusiasm and resources to build a new ADA Museum. Working together, we can make the vision of a new ADA Museum a reality.

Maj. Gen. (Ret.) John B. Oblinger
President, ADA Association